

STUDIES

in the Spirituality of Jesuits



1. The Christian Life Communities
as Sprung from
the Sodalities of Our Lady
George E. Ganss, S.J.

2. A Specimen Copy of *Communications*
from the International Service
in Ignatian Spirituality, Rome
Articles by
Miss José Gsell
Sister Françoise Vandermeersch

Published by the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality,
especially for American Jesuits working out their aggiornamento
in the spirit of Vatican Council II

THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCY SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

consists of a group of Jesuits from various provinces who are listed below. The members were appointed by the Fathers Provincial of the United States. The purpose of the Seminar is to study topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and to communicate the results to the members of the Assistancy. The hope is that this will lead to further discussion among all American Jesuits -- in private, or in small groups, or in community meetings. All this is done in the spirit of Vatican Council II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original charismatic inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the changed circumstances of modern times. The members of the Seminar welcome reactions or comments in regard to the topics they publish.

To achieve these purposes, especially amid today's pluralistic cultures, the Seminar must focus its direct attention sharply, frankly, and specifically on the problems, interests, and opportunities of the Jesuits of the United States. However, many of these interests are common also to Jesuits of other regions, or to other priests, religious men or women, or lay men or women. Hence the studies of the Seminar, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

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Foreword on the Informational Character of This Issue

The present issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* can be considered, in a way, to be chiefly informational. By incorporating within its covers a specimen copy of "*Communications* from the International Service in Ignatian Spirituality, Rome," it brings knowledge of this new series of monographs to some Jesuit readers who might not otherwise see a copy.

This issue is chiefly informational also in a second way. It will enable Jesuits to see more concretely how their spiritual tradition, particularly the *Spiritual Exercises*, is being utilized by others, lay and religious, men and women.

Miss Gsell's article deals with the use of the Exercises in the new Christian Life Communities into which the age-old Sodalities of Our Lady have evolved since General Congregation XXXI. Some Jesuits whom we consulted felt themselves insufficiently informed about this young movement. Hence we thought it advisable to present, by way of background for Miss Gsell's article, a historical sketch. This would recall to mind the main facts in the history of the Sodalities (*Congregationes Marianae*) and also present the highlights of their evolution since 1966 into the Christian Life Communities (*Communitates Vitae Christianae*).

Sister Françoise Vandermeersch's article too deals with the Exercises. It furnishes an example of their use with religious women as directors--a practice suggested by St. Ignatius himself in a letter of June 19, 1555 (text in De Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, p. 125). Back in the era of retreats preached to groups, extending roughly from the early seventeenth century through Vatican II, most of the retreats were conducted by priests. Since then, however, side by side with the preached group retreats which retain their value for many persons, the movement toward restoring the earlier procedure of St. Ignatius himself, retreats privately directed, has been steadily growing. In this work religious women have been serving more and more as directors or as members of a team of directors. Sister Françoise's account of what she has been doing in this line for the past decade or more will help toward making many Jesuits better informed about what is occurring in this field; and it will

enlighten and encourage other sisters who have been doing such work or are preparing for it.

All the information in this issue, hopefully, will help Jesuit directors or counselors to carry out with better understanding what General Congregation XXXI encouraged in its Decree 33, no. 6, on the Relationship of the Society to the Laity and Their Apostolate: ". . . we ought to help the laity in their apostolate. Jesuits should be prepared to offer their cooperation as counselors, assistants, or helpers in the works which the laity themselves promote and direct." That statement applies in great part not only to the laity but also to priests and religious who are drawing help from our spiritual tradition.

The present writer wishes to express his deep gratitude to many who have helped him in the preparation of the introductory article on the Solidarities and their Evolution into the Christian Life Communities--particularly Miss Clare A. Summers, Associate Executive-Secretary of the National Federation of Christian Life Communities, and Rev. Jack J. Campbell, S.J., the National Moderator. Circumstances made it necessary to compose the article in a brief time; and without the material they furnished the writer could not have met his deadline. But he alone is responsible for any defects which appear in the presentation.

George E. Ganss, S.J.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES AS SPRUNG FROM THE SODALITIES OF OUR LADY

by

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What, many Jesuits have wondered, has happened to the Sodalities of Our Lady? A decade or two ago one or more of them functioned in virtually every Jesuit high school, college, university, or parish. Also, in virtually every scholasticate there were sodality "academies," where scholastics gained knowledge about this apostolate and even apprenticeship in it. We have heard that the sodalities have evolved into the Christian Life Communities. But our ideas on all this remain rather vague. Busy with our own apostolates, we haven't been able to keep ourselves informed of the developments. Are these new Christian Life Communities truly functioning? in the United States?

The present paper will aim to answer such questions briefly by presenting a bird's eye view of the historical highlights. The chief focus will be on the factual data and structures. The spirit or charism and its dynamism for today will emerge clearly below in *Communication* No. 2 by Miss José Gsell.

I. THE SODALITIES OF OUR LADY, 1563-1965

A. Foundation and Canonical Approval

The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary was founded by a Belgian scholastic, Jan Leunis, in 1563. Eager to foster his students' spiritual growth, he assembled the more zealous of them in a classroom of the Roman college during after-school hours for prayer and pious exercises, especially in honor of Mary. In 1564 there were seventy members. The group drew up a set of rules. Sodalities modelled on this group soon sprang up in Jesuit colleges throughout Europe, and the original group in Rome became known as the "first" or "head" or "central" congregation or sodality (*Primaria Congregatio seu Primariaum Sodalitium*). As it became too large to meet in one classroom it was divided into three sections: the *Prima primaria*, the "first head or central" sodality, for the young men over 21, the *Secunda primaria* for those 14 to 21, and the *Tertia primaria* for those below 14.

By the bull *Omnipotentis Dei* of December 5, 1584, Pope Gregory XIII canonically erected the *Prima primaria* as a congregation or sodality, granted it numerous indulgences, and conferred on the Jesuit general power to erect other similar congregations and affiliate them to the *Prima primaria* [*congregatio*], the "First Principal [Congregation]." In that era the terms congregation, sodality, and confraternity were often used as synonyms to designate a body of the faithful, especially non-religious, who aimed to foster Catholic life by means of special exercises, and were governed by an ecclesiastical superior.¹

B. Growth in Jesuit and Non-Jesuit Institutions

Sodalities affiliated to the *Prima primaria* grew rapidly in number, and soon existed in connection with virtually all Jesuit colleges, churches, and residences in Europe and the Americas. They were groups of persons seriously cultivating their personal interior lives and apostolic activities. By 1580 there were some 30,000 members of affiliated sodalities. In 1586 Pope Sixtus V permitted membership to others than students. In the "Golden bull" of September 27, 1748, Benedict XIV enlarged the privileges and indulgences; and in a brief of September 8, 1751, he granted the Jesuit general authority to affiliate with the *Prima primaria* any sodality of either sex which was connected with a Jesuit house or church. Between the suppression and restoration of the Society (1773-1814) the sodalities were kept in existence by the pope and zealous pastors. In 1824 Leo XII restored to the Jesuit general his former powers in regard to sodalities. In 1825 the same pope granted the general faculties to affiliate to the *Prima primaria*, with the consent of a bishop involved, sodalities which were outside of Jesuit institutions. Thereafter growth of the movement was steady and rapid. In the United States alone, for example, 55 sodalities were affiliated up to 1854, 178 in the decade 1854-1864, 304 in 1864-1874, 589 in 1874-1884, 1,124 in 1884-1894, 1,368 in 1894-1904, 1,758 in 1904-1914, 2,357 in 1914-1926. In the world at large, some 35,000 new sodalities were affiliated to the *Prima primaria* within fifty years after the definition of the Immaculate Conception in 1848. In 1963, about 85,000 sodalities in more than 1,300 dioceses were on the list of affiliates.²

C. The "Common Rules" of 1587, 1855, 1910

The multiplication of sodalities after 1563 led many to desire uniform directives and norms, which would, moreover, facilitate the granting of further indulgences and other privileges by the Holy See. Early in his generalate Claudio Aquaviva took steps in this direction. Then in 1578 he promulgated the *Regulae communes*, rules applying or "common" to all the sodalities. In eight chapters they treated such matters as the nature of the sodalities, their purpose, exercises of piety, manner and criteria of admission, meetings, officers and their duties, and government. These rules remained in force until the suppression of the Society in 1773. After the restoration, they were revised and promulgated anew in 1855 by Father General Beckx for Jesuit and non-Jesuit sodalities. Some of the statutes of 1587 were dropped and others added; but about 115 are much the same in both documents.

Sodalities flourished in Spain in the latter nineteenth century and thus developed rules of their own, composed largely from those of 1587 and 1855. In 1909 Father General Wernz assembled fourteen Jesuit experts from many countries, who examined and revised all preceding rules and then drew up a new set which he promulgated on December 8, 1910. They are written in the form of a legal code with an improved logical order, and are more clear and precise than any which preceded them.³

These Common Rules of 1910 comprise the set familiar to American sodalists since then, and especially to Jesuits who were engaged in sodality work in Jesuit schools between about 1930 and 1965. They will recall many memories through citation here of a few of these rules which reveal much of the sodalities' spirit.

1. Sodalities of Our Lady are religious associations approved by the Holy See. They organize Catholics under Our Lady's name and cultivate in them a deep devotedness, reverence, and filial love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Under the patronage of the Mother of God, Sodalities of Our Lady aim at making their members outstanding Catholics who give themselves wholeheartedly to sanctifying themselves in their own states of life and strenuously endeavor, as far as their social conditions permit, to save and sanctify others and to defend the Church of Jesus Christ against the attacks of its enemies.

9. Sodalists shall spend some days each year in making the Spiritual Exercises. . . .

34. Sodalists shall be very diligent in performing those religious exercises which are particularly necessary for a fervent life. The daily exercises are the following:

Every morning, on rising, Sodalists shall make acts of faith, hope, and charity, give thanks to the Divine Majesty for benefits received, offer to God their labors of the day, make an intention to gain all possible indulgences that day, and say at least three Hail Mary's in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

They shall set aside and spend at least a quarter of an hour in mental prayer.

If possible, they are to participate in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

They shall recite the Rosary or an office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the evening, before retiring, they are to examine their conscience carefully and make a fervent act of contrition for all the sins of their life and especially for any committed that day.⁴

D. Variations in Observance

Great variations of practice in the manner of observing the Common Rules were much to be expected in four centuries of history with such vast numbers of sodalities and sodalists. Two poles often in tension were the number of sodalists and the quality of their spiritual practice. Often when either pole waxed in attention received, the other waned. During the last few decades of the nineteenth century and the first few of the twentieth, the Church was stressing monthly corporate Mass and communion for the laity. Sodalities were widely used to promote this movement, especially in the United States; and often the corporate Mass and communion sufficed in practice as the criteria for membership. This was something different from the daily exercises fostered in the rules of 1587 and 1910. But the Holy Spirit works in and through large numbers too; and immense good was done through these widespread sodalities.

To make the new rules of 1910 more effective, Father Wernz in 1913 asked the Jesuits to inaugurate sodality magazines in their various countries. Thus the *Queen's Work* was established in St. Louis with Father Edward F. Garasché as editor. In 1925 Fr. Daniel A. Lord was assigned to this post, in the hope that he could use his remarkable talents to impart a new life to the sodality movement throughout the nation. Unusually alert to the mentality and spiritual needs of American youth and to social issues, he

achieved remarkable success. He presented the sodality as a challenge and a way of life aimed to bring oneself and one's neighbor to God. In 1929 he organized the National Parish Sodality Advisory Board, which became a step toward national sodality unity. He started a series of pamphlets and other publications, of which the total sales were over 25,000,000 by 1963. In 1931, in response to Pius XI's call to Catholic Action, he founded the travelling Summer Schools of Catholic Action, which by 1963 had registered almost 300,000 participants.⁵

All this provided in the United States a widespread fertile soil in which the seeds of a new movement toward quality could take root. A great impetus toward such a movement came in *Bis saeculari*, the apostolic constitution on the sodalities issued by Pius XII on September 27, 1948. It praised and urged anew the Common Rules of 1910. In 1953 Pius XII also juridically established the World Federation of Sodalities, to secure their more effective cooperation in the lay apostolate throughout the world. A Jesuit experienced in sodality work, Father Louis A. Paulussen, was named Director of this World Federation, which now had its secretariat at Borgo Santo Spirito 8, Rome. These encouraging efforts of the Holy Father received hearty support from Father General Janssens. In response to directives from their general, many Jesuits threw themselves wholeheartedly from 1948 to 1965 into efforts to conduct sodalities according to *Bis saeculari* and the Common Rules of 1910.

They achieved some notable success. But they encountered discouraging difficulties, too, which grew as the years passed by. More and more during the 1950s many who had worked zealously and sincerely to promote sodalities according to *Bis saeculari* made remarks along the following lines. The Common Rules seem to be rules of a religious institute, not well adapted to lay life in our day. They urge practices which some sodalists take up sincerely for a few months or occasionally years, but then drop under the pressures of daily living. We profess to be training young persons during high school or university to a way of living which is to be continued for the rest of their lives. But it is a way of living which usually requires that they "pray together, work together, and play together"; and most of them will live after graduation in places where no adult sodality exists.

Even in cities where many high school and university sodalities produced well-trained sodalists, a central adult sodality for them after graduation met insuperable opposition. Pastors feared that any such group would draw these zealous young persons away from the activities of their own parishes.

Difficulties arose, too, from the word "rules." In countries where the Latin tradition of law was part of the culture, the word was subconsciously interpreted to mean a directive enshrining an ideal, something encouraging even if only partly attainable in practice. But in countries with the Anglo-Saxon legal tradition, many directors interpreted "rule" as a precept to be fulfilled literally under penalty of exclusion or expulsion; and this was discouraging to those who found themselves unable to observe a rule in all its details. After a year or two many sodalists, directors, and sodalities gave up. The National Federation of Sodalities began a revision of the Common Rules in 1959 but postponed it to await possible guidance from the forthcoming Vatican Council II.

II. TRANSITION TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES, 1966-1971

A. Directives on the Apostolate of the Laity from Council and Congregation

Then came Vatican Council II, with its decrees which urged that increased initiative and responsibility be given to the laity in the apostolate of the Church (for example, the Church, nos. 31, 33; the Church Today, nos. 36, 43; the Apostolate of the Laity, nos. 3, 9, 71). There came also Jesuit General Congregation XXXI, 1965-1966. Some delegates initiated efforts and preliminary drafts toward reaffirming but renewing the Sodalities (*Congregationes Marianae*), more or less according to the Rules of 1910, as an important Jesuit ministry. Although no separate document on the Sodalities survived the committee work, mention of them was made in two other documents which reflected the spirit of the Council on giving more initiative to the Laity.

Decree 27 on Pastoral Services urged superiors, in no. 11, to insist

2^o that the directors of works sincerely adapt themselves to contemporary pastoral practice, for example, . . . in the cooperation of Jesuits with a program of renewal of the sodalities (*Congregationes Marianae*) or the Apostleship of Prayer in those regions

where the bishops and major superiors, having first listened to the lay directors, decide in fraternal harmony to renew them so that they may be more effectively promoted.

Decree 33 on the Relationship of the Society to the Laity and Their Apostolate stated:

5. By means of special instruction and spiritual direction we should communicate to those who can profit by it a fuller understanding of the evangelical life according to the Exercises of St. Ignatius, which are also well suited to the lay state. Thus they may be able to direct all the acts of their daily professional, familial, and social life with a sincere mind and increased liberty to the greater glory of God, and may be able to discover and fulfill the divine will in all things and in this way devote themselves entirely to the service of their brothers as well. This direction is expected of us especially by the rejuvenated sodalities (*Congregationes Marianae renovatae*) and the various other associations of laymen who are trying to cultivate an intense Christian and apostolic life according to this spirit.

6. On the other hand, we ought to help the laity in their apostolate.

. . . We must open up to them in various ways wide participation in as well as responsibility for the direction, administration, and even government of our works, keeping of course the power of ultimate decision in the hands of the Society where it has the ultimate responsibility.

In the same spirit, . . . let the Society examine whether some works begun by us might be turned over to competent laymen for the greater good of the Church. . . .

B. Response from the World Federation of Sodalities

These pronouncements of Vatican II and General Congregation XXXI found attentive disciples in the officers, staff, and members of the World Federation of Sodalities, who soon devised worldwide consultations to implement them. Back in 1587, 1855, and 1910 ecclesiastics had composed the Rules, obtained papal approval of them, and handed them down to the directors and lay members for execution. Why not try now, with this guidance from Vatican II and General Congregation XXXI, to reverse this direction? The Roman office of the World Federation, and also the secretariats of many national federations such as the *Association Vie Chrétienne* in Paris or the National Federation of Sodalities in St. Louis, initiated many meetings to have the lay sodalists, with counsel from their ecclesiastical

moderators, work out directives which they found to be better adjusted to their lay circumstances, have them approved, after sufficient elaboration, by the Holy Father, and thus gain better cooperation from all the members in the task of implementation. The movement was to become truly lay with autonomy, but the Society would give it help and inspiration.

Hence from 1966 onward these sodalists held many meetings, in a spirit of communal discernment drawn from the Ignatian Exercises, toward renewing the spirit and structure of the Sodalities. The participants tried to keep the ancient spirit and tradition but make them more effective in the post-conciliar world.

A draft of a new set of directives was approved in an international meeting of the World Federation in Rome, October 19-21, 1967, and submitted shortly later to the Holy See for approval. In this draft the former title, Sodalities of Our Lady (*Congregationes Marianae*) was changed to Christian Life Communities (*Communitates Vitae Christianae*), and the name Common Rules (*Regulae communes*) to General Principles and Statutes of the Christian Life Communities (*Principia generalia et Statuta*). The World Federation of Sodalities became the World Federation of Christian Life Communities.

C. Approval of the New General Principles

Already on March 25, 1968, a letter came from the Secretariat of State of the Vatican, addressed by A. G. Cardinal Cicognani to Bishop René Audet, Ecclesiastical Assistant to the World Federation of Christian Life Communities. The letter approved the new Principles for experimental use during three years.⁶ Then Pope Paul VI gave definitive approval on May 31, 1971.

The spirit and some history of these new communities can perhaps be best given, for present purposes, by a few citations from official documents. Cardinal Cicognani's letter of March 25, 1968, states:⁷

After the meeting of the General Council of the World Federation of Marian Congregation, held at Rome, October 19-21, 1967, the Secretariat of your Federation sent to the Secretariat of State. . . a petition to obtain from the Holy Father the approval of the new General Principles proposed to replace the Common Rules of 1910, and also his approval of the new Statutes of the World Federation.

With the desire to give better service to the Church, it was

explained to us, and also to renew their association according to the spirit and norms of Vatican Council II, the members of the World Federation of Marian Congregations have perceived the need of proposing to the Holy See some modifications, some of them basic, in order that their association, while faithfully preserving the authentic riches of its tradition, could devote itself more simply and effectively to the service of God and men in the world of today. . . .

Some of these proposals touched on certain norms of the Apostolic Constitution *Bis saeculari*, promulgated by Pope Pius XII on September 27, 1948. This Constitution had foreseen neither the foundation of the World Federation which took place in 1953 nor the juridical effects which arose from it. Moreover, the traditional structures confirmed in the Constitution *Bis saeculari* had gradually lost their original significance.

Always in that same desire of better service, the participants in the meeting of the General Council preferred to adopt the new name of "World Federation of Christian Life Communities." They were convinced that this name communicated better the reality and internal dynamism of their association, without losing any of its specific elements.

These General Principles and Statutes have been the object of diligent examination by the Holy See. I am happy now to be able to inform you of the confirmation and approval of these documents by Pope Paul VI, for experimental use during three years, in the texts attached to this present letter. All the earlier rules and prescriptions which are in conflict with these General Principles and new Statutes are by this fact abrogated. . . .

These General Principles are arranged in the form of a preamble and four main parts. Something of the spirit running through them can be shown by a few citations from the version of 1971 for the United States.⁸

Preamble

2. Our movement is a way of Christian Life, not a rigid organization. These GENERAL PRINCIPLES are to be interpreted more in the spirit of the Gospel and the interior law of love than by the strict letter of the text. . . .

PART ONE. AIM AND CHARACTERISTICS

i. Aim of Christian Life Communities

3. Christian Life Communities aim to develop and sustain men and women, adults and youth, who commit themselves to the service of the Church and the world in every area of life: family, work, professional, civil, and ecclesial. Our communities are for all who feel the urgent need to unite their human life in all its dimensions with the fulness of their Christian faith. . . .

ii. Sources of Spirituality

4. The spirituality of Christian Life Communities is centered on Christ and a participation in the paschal mystery; it draws its strength from the Sacred Scriptures, the liturgy, the doctrinal development of the Church, and God's revelation of Himself in the needs of our time. We hold the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius as a specific source of our spirituality.

iii. Sense of the Church

5. Union with Christ expresses itself in union with the Church where Christ is here and now continuing His mission of salvation. By learning constantly to be sensitive to the signs of the times and the movements of the Spirit, we become better able to encounter Christ in all men and all situations. . . .

iv. Bond of Community

6. . . . In our Christian Life Communities, the members provide for each other a concrete experience of unity in love and action. . . .

v. Apostolic Life

7. We have received, as the people of God, the mission of being witnesses to Christ in our attitudes, words, and actions among men.

. . . We are convinced that . . . we must give priority to our commitment to renew and sanctify the temporal order. . . .

PART TWO. THE WAY OF LIFE

Adult Christian Life Communities . . .

Youth Christian Life Communities . . .

The Way of Life

12. The way of life of a Christian Life Community commits its member to seek, with the help of the community, a continuing, personal development that is spiritual, apostolic, and human. In practice this involves:

a) frequent, and even daily, participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and an intense sacramental life; daily practice of personal prayer, especially prayer based on Sacred Scripture; . . .

b) active involvement in the service of mankind by dedicating one's personal talents and professional skills to the renewal of the institutions of society in accord with truth and justice, especially in the struggle for truth and justice among the poor and oppressed;

c) the individual's responsibility to contribute to the meeting and activities of his community, . . .

PART THREE. JURIDICAL NORMS

17. All genuine Christian Life Communities possess three qualifying marks: a special bond with the hierarchy, affiliation to a federati

that is a member of the World Federation of Christian Life Communities, observance of the General Principles.

PART FOUR. STATUTES FOR THE WORLD FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES

Membership

Article 1. The World Federation, which has its center in Rome, is a union of national federations and federation groups which accept the General Principles as guiding norms for their activities.

The entire text of the principles and ample commentary on them is available in a volume by Father Francis K. Drolet, S.J., *New Communities for Christians* (New York: Alba House, 1972). The 396 pages of this inspirational volume "serve," as the publisher's verb states, "as a handbook in the reorganization of the Christian Life Communities formerly known as sodalities."

D. Directives from Father General Pedro Arrupe

A few months after the approval of the new General Principles by the Holy See, Father General Pedro Arrupe sent directives to the whole Society, encouraging Jesuit participation in this work.⁹ For the past two centuries, he pointed out, these "Marian Congregations or Communities of Christian Life" are a ministry not of the Society alone but of the Church at large. Nevertheless it is a work highly proper to the Society, in regard to those sodalities which we conduct in some institutions of our own and those others which we ought to aid by "inspiration, example, and various kinds of cooperation." The aim in preparing these new General Principles has been to foster the qualitative improvement sought by Pius XII by enriching it with the doctrinal and pastoral spirit of Vatican Council II.¹⁰ The Christian Life Communities are now autonomous. But major superiors ought to supply, after consultation with officers of the Communities, trained and capable Jesuit helpers, who should know the history, documentation, and genuine character of this movement.¹¹

III. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES TODAY, ESPECIALLY IN THE UNITED STATES

How are the new Christian Life Communities faring now? They seem to be in a stage of early but solid, promising growth. They truly are lay

groups cultivating intensive and apostolic lives, currently located in forty countries. A World Congress of the CLCs will be held in Manila in 1976.

Bishop René Audet of Joliet, Québec, Canada is the Ecclesiastical Assistant to the Holy Father for the World Federation of the Christian Life Communities, and the Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant is Father Nicholas H. Rieman, S.J. From his office at Borgo Santo Spirito 8, Rome, comes *Progressio*, edited by Miss José Gsell. It is published in English, French, and Spanish.

In the United States, the offices of the National Federation of Christian Life Communities are located at 3109 South Grand Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri, in property owned formerly by the Queen's Work and now by the American Assistancy. Most Reverend Maurice J. Dingman, Bishop of Des Moines, is the Episcopal Moderator. Father Jack J. Campbell, S.J., is the National Moderator pro tem, and Father Francis K. Drolet, S.J., is the Religious National Promoter for Jesuits. Mr. Tim J. Rouse of Omaha, Nebraska, is the President, Mr. John R. Brown the First Vice-President, Mrs. Thomas Murtagh the Secretary, Mr. Frederick A. Hodes the Treasurer, and Miss Marie A. Schimelfening the Executive Secretary who carries on the day to day work in the St. Louis office.

This office issues, among other publications, the organ of the American federation, the *Christian Life Communicator*, a monthly of eight pages in tabloid form. Volume 8, No. 10 (November, 1974) lists, on pages 5 and 6, the titles and addresses of the affiliated CLCs in the United States. They number 139, located in 44 dioceses. Most of them are in parishes. But at least five are in Jesuit high schools (in Baltimore, Dallas, Fall River, Houston, and Scranton), and six are in Jesuit colleges or universities (in Baltimore, Buffalo, Chicago, Mobile, Philadelphia, and Santa Clara). Other sample titles of interest here are Alumni Fordham University, New York Professional-Loyola, John XXIII Professional (in St. Louis), Santa Clara Professional, Catholic Alumni of the Holy Cross College (in Worcester). Many, but far from all, of the 139 affiliated communities have Jesuit chaplains. In addition, some fifty to seventy-five new CLCs are in process of formation on high school, college, and adult levels.

The Liberation for Each Person and All Peoples now constitutes an important international theme for the world movement of the CLCs. In the United States workshops and study days are being organized to help the membership experientially feel and know the implications of this theme of liberation.

An example in point is the Tenth Biennial Convention of U.S. Christian Life Communities, which will be held August 13-17, 1975, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The theme will be: Reconciliation and Liberation through Christian Community. The office of the National Federation of CLCs offers to those who wish, prior to the convention itself, individually directed authentic Ignatian Spiritual Exercises which will be conducted at nearby Mt. Holyoke. Right after these retreats but still prior to the convention, there will be a formation course of about a week for CLC members. These retreats and the subsequent course will be patterned on procedures used with some 105 retreatants from 31 countries by the World Federation of CLCs in Rome in 1973. The gist of the course consists in prayerful and reflective discussion of the living out of the Exercises for the CLC way of life--much as Miss José Gsell describes in her article presented below.

After the foregoing historical sketch, the spirit or charism which animates these new Christian Life Communities will now, we hope, be more concretely perceptible in her article, *Communication 2*.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 On these matters, see Eldar Mullan, S.J., *The Sodality of Our Lady Studied in the Documents* (New York, 1912), esp. pp. 2, 7, 8, 5*, 9*; *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1912), XIV, 128 (henceforth abbreviated as *CathEnc*); De Guibert, S.J., *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, pp. 295-301, 500-504, and the Index, s. v. Sodalties.
- 2 *CathEnc*, XIV, 128; Mullan, pp. 130*-131*; B. Wolf, S.J., *The Sodality Movement in the United States, 1926-1936*, p. 21; *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967, hereafter abbreviated as *NCathEnc*), XIII, 409.
- 3 Mullan, pp. 26-31, 24*-42*; 277*-291*.
- 4 Cited from *The Common Rules: Sodalties of Our Lady* (St. Louis: The Queen's Work, 1957).
- 5 *NCathEnc*, VIII, 990; XIII, 409; W. B. Faherty, S.J., "A Half-Century of the Queen's Work," *Woodstock Letters*, XCII (1963), 99-114.
- 6 *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, XV (1968), 191-201.
- 7 *Ibid.*, XV (1968), 191.
- 8 *General Principles: Christian Life Communities* (St. Louis, 63118: National Federation of Christian Life Communities, 3109 South Grand, 1971).
- 9 *Acta Romana S.I.*, XV (1968), 321-327.
- 10 *Acta Romana S.I.*, XV (1968), 321-322.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 327; XVI (1973), 71-72.

PLEASE NOTE


 Pages i-iv and 1-25 of *Communications*
 are equivalently
 pages 61-89 of Vol. VII, No. 2 of
Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits

